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Comparison of US and USSR Civil Defense Programs

1. Any overall comparison of the present Soviet civil defense program and programs proposed for the US is complicated by the different emphases the two governments place on various aspects of their programs. Most of the US programs concentrate on shelter construction. The Soviet program emphasizes compulsory public training, massive urban evacuation, the use of inherent or improvised fallout shelter for evacuees, and limited blast shelter construction for those remaining in cities. Except in the most general sense, the Soviet program is not directly comparable with any single US alternative, for it relies extensively on a public training effort significantly larger than any proposed for the US.

2. Because multiple criteria exist for constructing alternatives and for assessing the effectiveness of any single combination of tactics and hardware, a more complex comparison of Soviet and US programs was conducted. The Soviet program has

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been described in terms of some of the parameters listed in the draft report plus others which characterize the Soviet approach. The attached table summarizes the comparison.

3. Goals: In terms of basic goals, the Soviet program is most like US Posture 3, which is designed to provide limited protection for the entire populace. The Soviet objective is similar, but the means by which the USSR seeks to achieve it are somewhat different. The US would attempt to protect its population by providing well in advance, a large number of shelters--both inherent shelters as well as slanted construction. The Soviet Union, in contrast, intends to make up for a shortage of inherent protective space by training its citizens, most of whom will be evacuated, to improvise their own fallout shelters at the time they are needed. The Soviets also seek to reduce the number of potential casualties by informing the general populace--through compulsory indoctrination--of the destructive effects of modern weapons and of the protective characteristics of various structures.

4. Systems: The combination of proposed US tactics and hardware which is most comparable to present Soviet programs is Posture 3C, which calls

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for evacuation of the urban population to stocked, inherent fallout shelters. Here again, however, the Soviet program differs in one major aspect. Although the Soviets have emphasized evacuation techniques, adequate shelter facilities of the type envisioned by the US are not available.

5. Shelters: The US has many more inherent shelters than the USSR, and for quite some time it has been building structures providing much more natural fallout protection than is common in Soviet buildings. The Soviets are building many industrial and multi-storied residential structures without even providing basements. We believe that while a relatively small number of blast shelters are available for essential personnel and activities, most Soviet fallout shelters are the inherent type.

6. After World War II and especially during the Fifties, the Soviet government advocated the construction of basement shelters in new apartment housing. Consequently, the type of Soviet shelter is most compatible with US Posture 2B, which calls for adequately-stocked inherent basement shelters. As the table indicates, however, these are proportionately fewer shelter spaces available in

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the USSR than are to be provided under any of the US programs. Furthermore, the Soviets apparently have not undertaken a large-scale program to stock their shelters with even a minimum of essential equipment and supplies. In fact, the populace is advised to purchase a few days' food supplies and keep them on hand for emergency use.

7. Communications and Warning: The Soviets have several communications systems to support civil defense, but their entire national communications and warning system is probably inferior to ours.

8. Administration and Training: The massive Soviet training effort, designed to give about 20 hours of instruction to over 10 million persons every year, is significantly larger than that envisioned under any of the US alternatives. The Soviets also maintain a substantially larger number of administrative personnel, in part because of the size of the training program. There are about 25,000-30,000 full- and part-time Soviet personnel engaged in administrative and support activities, whereas the US strength, presently about 7,000 full- and part-time employees, probably would not be more than about 15,000 under any of the postulated future programs.

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9. Expenditures. Annual Soviet expenditures for civil defense cannot be estimated precisely. We judge that they are in excess of 150 million rubles but that they are less than two or three times that amount. In these broad terms civil defense represents about one to two percent of total Soviet defense spending. Using total cost as the basis for comparison, the Soviet program is most like US Posture 4, which calls for an annual outlay of \$200 million to \$1.6 billion--between about three-tenths of one percent and two percent of total US defense expenditures. The problem of translating the cost of any Soviet program into US dollars is made even more difficult in the case of civil defense programs by the fact that the Soviet program involves nationwide compulsory training. The Soviet training program probably costs only about 100 million rubles per year, because training is compulsory and the trainees are not compensated. An equivalent US program under which trainees might receive some payment could cost as much as \$1.2 billion per year.

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